

New Netherlands Coin Co., Inc.

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July 7, 1969

Hon. R. Henry Norweb
9511 Lake Shore Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio 44108

Dear Ambassador:

Both Charles and I were somewhat surprised to receive your letter of July 2nd inquiring about the Blake & Agnell triple ingot impression strip which Mrs. Norweb purchased from us and gave you as a Christmas gift in 1954.

There are two known issue ingots, bearing a denomination, of the identical type shown on your triple impression strip. One of these is of the denomination of \$25 and represents the typical or regular issue; it shows the fineness as 900/1000. This piece is in my personal collection, and has been there for fifteen years. The second specimen is stamped \$23.30, and shows the weight together with the fineness. This last represents the atypical issue, and is exactly on the order of the \$9.43 and \$14.25 Moffat & Co. ingots, that is, it represents an off-weight example from the end of a used strip. The \$23.30 piece is owned by a prominent mid-western dealer, who purchased it from us in 1953.

Both of the above ingots last appeared in the 1965 or 18th Edition of the "Guide Book." They were removed from that Whitman publication for several reasons. The most important of these is that I signed a contract with Whitman in 1965 to eventually edit and produce a deluxe and comprehensive standard work on U.S. numismatics. It was decided that "one-of-a-kind" items should appear in a specialized work and not in the popular selling "Guide Book." This decision was reached because of an agreement in thinking between myself and Dick Yeoman, which was in turn partly motivated by a strict page limitation relative to the production of the "Guide Book." You can confirm this by writing to Dick Yeoman.

What I currently know about the activities of BLAKE & AGNELL ASSAYERS and BLAKE & COMPANY, who operated in Sacramento circa 1854-56, is more or less given on pages 229 and 230 of the 1965 (or 18th Edition) "Guide Book." I have learned more about the earlier activities of Gorham Blake (before he became an assayer), and I also have traced him to Idaho Territory circa 1865-68 (where he issued mixed metal and silver ingots bearing the stamp of BLAKE & COMPANY).

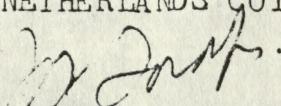
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My source for these pieces prefers to remain anonymous. Likewise, he prefers (and I concur) in keeping the original sources (there were two) confidential. I think you can understand our thinking in this connection, particularly in view of the nasty and vicious activities of one or more persons during the past few years.

I will be very happy to sit down with you upon your next visit to New York and give you any additional information concerning your ingot strip that you might require. It goes without saying, that Charles and I stand behind everything we sell, and should you entertain the slightest reservations about your ingot strip, we will be happy to refund the purchase price without the slightest hesitation.

Respectfully yours,

NEW NETHERLANDS COIN CO. INC.


John J. Ford, Jr.

JJF:dn